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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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It's been a wild week folks! The madness started when I took a trip to Maine to visit my father and brother. The visit went well. Part of my visit was to include helping my brother get his boat from my father's house to my brother's, using my truck. My brother drove, since he felt that if we got stopped for not having a plate on the boat trailer, he'd be the one to get the ticket. Fine with me. Less than a mile from my father's house, one of the wheels to the trailer goes rolling past us at a fast clip! It rolled down a busy major road, down a hill, around a curve, and out of site. Meanwhile, we're stopped at a traffic light with a disabled trailer. Naturally, the policeman that we passed about two blocks back using radar, saw us and drove up. To make a long story less long, my brother got a ticket for the unregistered trailer, and had the boat and trailer towed away until the trailer got registered. To make matters worse - remember that roaming tire? Turns out that once it got around that curve and out of site, it ended up in a parking lot that was ALMOST empty. According to Murphy's Law, you know it had to hit a parked car and cause damage! The saga continues/worsens trying to figure out who is responsible for the damages. The latest results show that it's my brother's responsibility (as we had already decided upon). The victim wants to go through my insurance, but I just learned today that my insurance will not cover it. So, I think there will be a battle between the victim and my brother. The unbelievable luck he has!

So, it appears that winter has come early and hard! It's been downright bitter cold around here, with enough snow to make it a pain driving. Me, I don't worry about it; my concerns are the lunatics out there who think they know how to drive in the snow! I'm not ready for this stuff yet, but it appears that it really doesn't matter - it's here!

The good part of the past week, after seeing my family, is that I finally got some great results on my search for that rolltop desk that I mentioned a couple of weeks ago. I guess persistence (and luck) pays off. Late last weekend, while on eBay, I saw three desks that I was interested in. The first one was nice, but had some wear on the leather surface of the writing area, so I didn't bid high. There was a reserve price on it. Although I had the high bid on the desk, the reserve was never met. First desk gone. The second had a high starting price, so I figured I wasn't going to get far with that one even if I bid once or twice on it. The third one had a low starting bid, and a few token bids, but also had a reserve. The second desk time of auction had about a day left; the third was on for a few more days. I decided to wait to see if there were any bids on the second desk (no

reserve, by the way) before I bid on the third. With about 20 minutes left to the auction on the second desk, I placed an opening bid to match the starting bid. I hung up (my computer uses a second phone line). My house phone rings and I get involved in the conversation with my father - he's calling me to give me some more information about the afore-mentioned accident. I look at my watch and realize there are only a few more minutes left to the auction of the second desk. I quickly get back online and check the status of my bid. No one else has bid. The seconds wind down, slowly! The desk was mine, finally. So, I hope to see it arrive in the next couple of weeks; it's a really nice one!

Until next time...

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AliveSX Released

Ladies and Gentlemen, Sts and CiH/Alive Team are proud to present another issue of their ST diskmage : ALIVE! About 70 articles, nice pictures, exclusive music and an intro by MJJ PROD. Do you need more reasons to download it ? :)

http://alive.atari.org

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Mother Nature has been up to her old tricks again. As of Friday, we here in southern New England have gotten more snow this year than we did all last winter. And the official start of winter is still about three weeks away.

I like snow. It's another one of those miniature miracles of nature. I understand the chemistry and physics of why snow looks and acts as it does, but that doesn't remove the wonder of it. To me, not being enchanted by falling snow is like looking at a Picasso or Rembrandt and thinking that it's not a thing of beauty because it's just pigment on canvas. That's missing the whole point.

Perhaps it's because snow makes everything look clean... nah, that's not it. After a couple of hours of snow plows and sand trucks taking care of the roads it looks dingy and dirty and just plain nasty. Well, whatever the reason,

Now, for people who get more than their share of snow, it's probably a different story. I can see how it could become an obstacle or simply be

taken for granted.

If you're one of those people who get lots of snow, you probably know what I mean. It's just there. It becomes a familiar fact of life.

I try not to take anything for granted. I know that I fail miserably most of the time with most things, but I try. To stand out in the driveway and look up into the sky and see millions upon millions of snowflakes gently cascading down fills me with a feeling that's hard to describe. It doesn't only happen with snow, either. If you look hard enough, you can always find something to fill you with wonder. I'm sure that at some time in the future scientists will find a link between standing in the driveway and looking up into the falling snow and the production of some special chemical in the brain that causes a mild euphoria. Hell, _I_ could have told them that! <grin>

Well, let's get to the news, hints, tips, and info from the UseNet

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
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'Donald' asks for help with his TT:

"I was setting up my TT with the Super Nova Mach 64 graphics card to run midi apps when (after attempting to put an extra syquest drive on) I lost access to the hard drive! Now the files needed to bring up the graphics card (and the monitor) are inaccessible. Does anyone know the procedure for making a bootable disk to make the screen come on?

This is a minor disaster! I have tons of midi apps on the TT hard drive and now I can't get to them."

Mark Duckworth tells Donald:

"Unplug the monitor and replug it back into the TT. If the graphic drivers won't load, the video display will go to the original TT video port. Unless of course you blew your TT video up like my roommate did ;-) But anyway. I believe there's 4 programs. You need to run in this order
emulator.prg
menu.prg
something_bib.prg
sta_vdi.prg

and then whala. I know this because while farting around with my own mach 64 nova the other day I broke it bad and had to refigure this all out since it was setup years ago."

'Richard B' asks about his STE's Link II:

"My STE suddenly can't see my SCSI drive. Cables all seem to be OK. Tried cable and adaptor on my Stacy too. It can't see it either. Any ideas on confirming the adaptor is dead or fixing it?"

Greg Goodwin asks Richard:

"What do you mean by 'see'? Assuming you are using ICD drivers, does the HD show up during the bootup screen?"

Richard explains:

"No, it doesn’t show up on the boot up screen. The STE or Stacy can’t detect/see it."

Barrie at Keychange adds:

"What I think was meant is, do you see the ICD banner and drive details as the machine attempts to boot?

Have you tried running the boot prog from floppy?

All the common boot progs, AHDI, HDdriver and ICD etc, put some sort of banner/info on the screen.

Is the red LED on the Link II lit?

You also ask about your monitor, did this problem show up at the same time? Send the Link in and I’ll test it."

Richard tells Barrie:

"With the drive connected to my Stacy via the Link II, I see the ICD banner on boot which displays the internal SCSI drive but not the external drive which it used to.

The LED is lit. No the drive failed first."

Greg adds:

"I’ve never heard of Link II failing, but I suppose it is possible. I’d take up Barrie on his offer, but I’d also check the cable as I’ve had a couple fail on systems that were not moved or altered in any way. I know it sounds strange, but a new cable got it working again."

Shane Curd asks about dial-up BBS’s in the US:

"I see several European Atari BBSes still being operated, but I’m really interested in some dial-up BBSes here in the US with Atari software and users. Long distance calls aren’t an issue as long as they’re here in the states."

Lance Ringquist tells Shane:

"I have no idea if any are left. My question to you is: Would anyone here be interested in a new atari st bbs program? It could be a stand alone, or a telenet. i am looking for feedback."

Mark Duckworth tells Lance and Shane:

"You guys really should try Octopus if you haven’t by now. It supports telnet or bbs over any port. Supports all ataris and clones, gem windowing, virtual console or tos mode support. It’s spectacular in my opinion ;-) That and if you want any features added, I have the source code and can get cracking away. Plus it’s freeware too."

Greg Goodwin mirrors Mark’s thoughts:

"I’m not so sure that would be a good idea, as there are several good BBS programs (e.g. Octopus) already available. With the Internet, there just isn’t much demand for a BBS, although we could certainly start one if there were interest."

Jim DeClercq talks a bit about SilkMouse:

"Someone posted that Silkmouse was unstable on his machine. One version has a bad case of mouse creep on my TT, but there are two versions, and the older one works perfectly.

The older one divides mouse speed up into three speed ranges, and uses a different gain multiplier for each, and is adjustable for that.

The newer one uses one nonlinear curve, and that is the one that misbehaves, for no known reason."

Mike Freeman tells Jim:

"I was the person who posted that Silkmouse makes my system unstable. First, I think I do have the older version you speak of, as that's the type of adjustments that I can make on it. Second, it wasn't a matter of the mouse pointer "creeping" or anything. It was that it caused other programs to crash from time to time. I was having random unexplainable crashes when using Magic. Someone asked that I send them my AUTO folder order, and when they saw I used Silkmouse, they suggested removing it. This seems to have fixed the problem. It was very random (any program at any time would crash), and intermittent (I might not see it happen for weeks, then it would happen a number of times, then nothing for a while). Since I stopped using it, my system's been much more stable."

Mark Bedingfield jumps in and posts:

"Funny you should mention it, I had weird problems too. Removing silkmouse and putting up with NVDI was better. I haven't tried Maccel yet tho? Will try it out soon.

As a note both versions of Silkmouse did strange things. It was an awesome program tho."

Rob Jenkins asks about using an external drive on his Falcon:

"A while ago, I got a falcon with a 6gig IDE drive, partitioned into about 8 drives.When I boot up the computer, all the hard drives show up. I connected my External Zip drive to the computer, but every time I start the computer, I have to go to the menu and click Install Devices to make it appear. I have just also added a 1 external scsi to it also, and again, I have to click the Install Devices option to actually see the drives. When the computer is restarted, they disappear, and I have to click the install devices option every time the computer is switched on to get the icons on the desktop to access the drives.

(I have HDDriver 8 if this helps with the answer)
How do I make these icons always appear."

'Donald' tells Rob:

"After installing the drives go to the desktop and press "S" to save the desktop. That should keep the drives on the desktop after you boot."

Peter West adds:

"A 'silly' question: After 'Install Devices', did you save the desktop? This should write a new NEWDESK.INF file with all the

devices (and any program icons etc as well as installed programs) to the boot drive, which will be used next time you boot.

If this does not work, are you using XBOOT or STOOP configured to select one of a number of NEWDESK.INF files? If so, you have to copy the saved file, modified as necessary, to one of the entries. (I am doing this with XBOOT to have different options available for various resolutions and external disk set-ups)."

Rob now posts:

"Ok, so if you see my previous post [how do I make my SCSi always appear], you may see I couldn't get my external drive icons to always stay on the desktop.I decided that I would back up the entire contents of drive C to the new external Scsi drive I had (so I at least always had a copy) and then would format drive C and start over. [the reason for this was that there was it was a 2nd hand falcon, and there was a lot of software on there that I didn't know how to use, and didn't really know what it was (though I've backed it up anyway).

When I turned the computer back on, it booted up to a horrible resolution with only A + B drive icons and the trash icon. Having dug out my HDDriver disk (version 8, though I do also have v7.8) I managed to work out how to install the internal 6gig IDE drive.

I played about with the desktop resolutions, drive icons, colour etc and was able to save the desktop. I couldn't seem to get the external drives to appear though, and tried playing about on HDDriver a little more, and I was able to get them recognized in the program (though I obviously didn't want to partition them as I have the old contents of old C still on one of the three partitions.)

Going back to the desktop and even restarting didn't make a difference, I couldn't get the external Scsi drive to appear (though I could get the zip to appear, and the scsi h/drive was connected to that).

I found what I thought to be a scsi driver in an auto folder on the hddriver 7.8 disk, and so put that in the auto folder on c drive, only now, when I turn the computer on, I can't get it to load to the desktop, it goes through the memory count, but then seems to just reload the same driver until it bombs out.

putting a disk in A drive doesn't force the computer to load that first, is that correct, or do I need to do something else to force the floppy to boot before the hard drive, and get me to the desktop so I can remove the two files I put in (both .prg's)."

Jos can de Gruitier tells Rob:

"HDDriver can do everything you want. First install it in C dir, Menu Install from HDDRUTIL.APP. Autoconfigure so HDDRIver sees the hard disks and restart. Everything should be working now..."

Nicholas Steele adds:

"Same thing happened when I reformatted. After I "Installed devices" icons for all my partitions on the internal drive and Zip drive appeared on the desktop."

Greg Goodwin adds:

"Hold down the Alternate key when turning on the Falcon.

Alternatively, another Atarian posted this procedure about 10 months ago:

1. Switch power off and insert chosen floppy.
2. Switch on and *as soon as* the power led lights up, hold ALTERNATE
3. When the floppy drive led lights up, release Alternate.
4. Wait a few seconds, then press any key.

In any event, you need to read the TOS manual ASAP. Most of the things you are asking are listed there."

Well folks, that's about it for this time around. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Microsoft To Double Its Investment in Xbox?

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Microsoft May Double Its Investment in Xbox

Software giant Microsoft Corp. said on Wednesday it would pour more resources into its efforts to carve out a position in the $10 billion video game market rather than cutting its losses and exiting from the venture.

Microsoft's Chief Financial Officer John Connors, when asked if the world's number one software maker had an "exit strategy" for the year-old Xbox video game machine, said in a Web cast: "The fallback position is probably to double down and make it successful."

Although Microsoft hasn't disclosed how much it has spent on the Xbox so far, figures released last month showed that the home entertainment division, which includes the Xbox, lost $177 million in the last quarter.

Microsoft is expected by analysts to spend more than $2 billion over five years on the Xbox machine, which launched a year ago as part of Microsoft's

push to get its technology and software off the desktop and into living rooms worldwide.

Connors was speaking at the Credit Suisse First Boston annual technology conference in Scottsdale, which was closed to media.

Japan’s Sony Corp., whose PlayStation consoles have been the best-selling video game machines in history, is competing aggressively with Microsoft to hold on to its leading market position.

Both the Xbox and the PlayStation 2 are now linked to the Internet, which is expected to fuel further growth in game titles as players play video games and compete against each other in virtual worlds from their living rooms.

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A-ONE’s Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

West Virginia to Join Microsoft Settlement Fight

West Virginia’s attorney general said on Monday that the state will join Massachusetts in appealing a judge’s decision to endorse a settlement of the Microsoft Corp. antitrust case.

West Virginia attorney general Darrell McGraw filed a notice in federal court that the state will challenge last month’s decision by U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly to approve the settlement.

In a statement, McGraw said the state will join the appeal because the settlement, negotiated between Microsoft and the U.S. Justice Department last year, does not go far enough to end all of Microsoft’s illegal practices.

"No reputable government should plea poverty and allow an adjudicated lawbreaker to retain their ill-gotten gains," McGraw said.

Massachusetts filed notice on Friday that it would appeal the decision. The District of Columbia and seven other states -- California, Connecticut, Iowa, Florida, Kansas, Minnesota and Utah -- said they would not appeal.

Instead, these jurisdictions said they will focus on ensuring that Microsoft complies with the Nov. 1 ruling by Kollar-Kotelly.

Microsoft is still defending itself against dozens of class-action lawsuits around the country that were filed in the wake of the government antitrust suit.

It also faces civil antitrust suits filed by rivals such as Sun Microsystems Inc. and AOL Time Warner unit Netscape Communications.

A federal judge in Baltimore is scheduled to hear opening arguments on Tuesday in the Sun lawsuit, which seeks to force Microsoft to include Sun’s Java programming language in Windows XP.

The settlement approved by Kollar-Kotelly includes giving computer makers greater freedom to feature rival software on their machines by allowing them to hide some Microsoft icons on the Windows desktop.

The appeals court ruled in June 2001 that Microsoft had illegally maintained its Windows operating system monopoly, but rejected a trial court proposal to break the company in two.

The case was then transferred to Kollar-Kotelly to determine the appropriate remedies in the case. She heard 32 days of testimony to determine what sanctions should be imposed on Microsoft.

During the remedy hearings, the attorneys for the states argued that the antitrust sanctions should be designed to stop the company from using Windows to crush competition in the markets for emerging technologies such as server software and handheld computers.

In her Nov. 1 ruling, Kollar-Kotelly rejected nearly all the demands for stronger sanctions.

Judge: Sun’s Java on Microsoft May Have Merit

A federal judge hearing Sun Microsystems Inc.’s antitrust suit against Microsoft Corp. said on Tuesday that forcing Microsoft to carry Sun’s Java software in the Windows operating system could be an "attractive" remedy.

U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz had tough questions for both companies during opening arguments, but was sympathetic to letting Sun’s Java compete without distortions "wrought by the violations Microsoft has done."

Motz said leveling the playing field between Sun’s write- once, use-anywhere Java language and Microsoft’s .Net Internet services was a more "elegant" remedy that having economists try to later figure out what might have been.

Microsoft dropped Java, a computer language designed to run on various operating systems, when it introduced Windows XP last year. It later reversed itself and said it would start including Java in a Windows XP update, but only until 2004.

Microsoft attorney David Tulchin pointed out to Motz that a judge in the long-running government antitrust case against Microsoft had recently rejected a Java must-carry demand by nine states seeking stiffer sanctions in that case.

Motz said he was not bound by Colleen Kollar-Kotelly’s Nov. 1 settlement order. "I was surprised at the vehemence with which Judge Kollar-Kotelly rejected (the must-carry proposal)," he said.

Motz is also overseeing other antitrust lawsuits filed against Microsoft. AOL Time Warner unit Netscape Communications, Be Inc. and Burst.com have filed legal action, and there are separate consumer class-action suits.

Sun is one of Microsoft’s biggest critics. Microsoft, in turn, blames Sun for helping orchestrate the broad antitrust case against it as a business tactic.

In 1997, Sun filed a suit accusing Microsoft of deliberately sabotaging Java by flooding the market with incompatible versions. Microsoft settled in early 2001 by paying Sun $20 million for limited use of the Java technology.

Sun filed its antitrust suit in March after a federal appeals court, in June of 2001, upheld a lower court ruling that Microsoft had broken U.S. antitrust laws and illegally maintained its monopoly over personal computer operating systems.

The appellate judges said Microsoft had promoted a "polluted" version of Java to deceive Java developers and protect its Windows operating system.

Tulchin reminded Motz that those same judges also found no liability because Microsoft’s version of Java ran more swiftly in Windows. But Motz replied: "I’m not bound by that finding."

Motz asked Microsoft why he shouldn’t grant Sun’s must-carry request on Java.

Tulchin said Sun wanted a "free ride" on Windows because it was unwilling to do the hard work of getting Java distributed to computer users.

"The antitrust laws were not promulgated so that one competitor could take a free ride on the back of another competitor," he said.

Tulchin added there was no immediate prospect of irreparable harm to Sun that would justify forcing Microsoft to carry Java. Past violations against Sun were "ancient history" and had already been settled, he said.

Motz asked Sun why it needed Java distribution via Windows if it was a better product than Microsoft’s .Net services.

Sun’s attorney, Rusty Day, told the judge that Microsoft should be forced to distribute Java as part of Windows because Microsoft plans to use .Net to wipe out Java.

Day, citing previous court rulings that concluded Microsoft had taken illegal steps to hobble Java, asked: "Will this court call foul" or "will it allow Microsoft to exploit all the disadvantages that it illegally inflicted on its competitor?"

By refusing to carry Java, Microsoft could tip the market in favor of .Net just as it tipped the Internet browser market toward its Internet Explorer and away from the rival Netscape Navigator, Day told the judge.

Judge Eyes Shortcut in Sun Case Against Microsoft

A federal judge on Wednesday suggested Sun Microsystems Inc. drop some demands and go directly to trial on whether to force software giant Microsoft Corp. to carry Sun’s Java program.

U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz said Sun, in its private antitrust suit against Microsoft, might want to drop its request for a preliminary injunction on carrying Java and set aside its claim for more than $1 billion in damages.

Motz did not elaborate on why he made this suggestion. A lawyer for Sun, Rusty Day, said the company would consider the idea.

Santa Clara, California-based Sun claims Microsoft views its Java software as a threat because it can run on a variety of operating systems, not just on Microsoft's Windows.

Sun charges Microsoft has tried to sabotage Java by series of actions, most recently dropping it from Windows XP, which was introduced last year.

Microsoft later reversed itself and said it would start including Java in a Windows XP update, but only until 2004.

To get a preliminary injunction, Sun has to show that Microsoft presents immediate and irreparable harm to Java.

Andy Gavil, a law professor at Howard University who has closely watched Microsoft's big government antitrust battle, said Motz may feel: "'Why go through the extra process.' He may feel like liability is pretty much established."

In court on Tuesday, Motz seemed sympathetic to leveling the playing field between Sun's Java and Microsoft's .Net Internet services strategy, saying it was more "elegant" than having economists later calculate what "would have been."

On Wednesday, an expert witness called by Sun said Microsoft was overstating the advantage Java already had over .Net due to Java's earlier distribution via Windows.

Economist Dennis Carlton said much of the Java already in the market was a version promoted by Microsoft that was incompatible with Sun's version.

Judge Motz agreed, interjecting: "Not only does it overstate it, I would think that having noncompliant Java machines would be a detriment."

Microsoft attorney Michael Lacovara challenged Carlton for testifying that it would be relatively inexpensive for Microsoft to resume carrying Java in Windows.

Lacovara charged Carlton didn't know the true cost and his testimony amounted to saying "let's force Microsoft to carry bad technology and burden consumers."

Sun's antitrust lawsuit is one of several currently before Motz that have been filed in the wake of Microsoft's long-running antitrust fight with the government.

A settlement of the government suit was endorsed by U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly last month, although Massachusetts and West Virginia are appealing.

Sun filed its antitrust lawsuit in March, after a federal appeals court upheld a lower court ruling in the government case that Microsoft had broken U.S. antitrust laws and illegally maintained its monopoly in PC

operating systems.

Motz also is overseeing cases filed by AOL Time Warner unit Netscape Communications, Be Inc. and Burst.com, as well as class-action attorneys suing on behalf of consumers.

Judge Says Sun Assaulted by Microsoft

A federal judge on Thursday compared Microsoft Corp.’s treatment of Sun Microsystems Inc. to the 1994 knee-clubbing of Olympic skater Nancy Kerrigan, but indicated he might not grant Sun the immediate relief it seeks.

During a third day of hearings in the civil antitrust case, U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz remained receptive to forcing Microsoft to resume carrying Sun’s Java program but wondered if Sun truly faced immediate and irreparable harm.

Motz did not hide his skepticism about Microsoft’s behavior.

"Isn’t there a social value in being able to participate fairly in a market, undistorted by your competitors?" Motz asked Microsoft’s final witness.

University of Chicago economist Kevin Murphy had testified that Microsoft’s past misdeeds did not justify a must-carry order on Java. Such an order would be "messed up," robbing Microsoft of some of its incentive to improve Windows.

Motz at that point compared Microsoft’s acts against Java to the assault on Kerrigan by the ex-husband of rival skater Tonya Harding.

Microsoft, which had promoted an incompatible form of Java that worked best on Windows and taken other steps to hinder Java, was like a baseball team that had stolen game signals from the other side, Motz said.

But Motz was clearly troubled about whether the standard of harm had been met to grant Sun a preliminary injunction.

"Your position doesn’t hold up on that, does it?" Motz challenged Sun’s attorney Rusty Day.

Summing up for Microsoft, lawyer David Tulchin said it had not been shown the market would tip to Microsoft .Net Internet services software if Java was not in Windows.

"Seems to me the jig is up, the motion needs to be denied," Tulchin told the court.

Motz said he would rule on the preliminary injunction in 10 days.

In court on Wednesday, Motz had suggested Sun drop its request for the preliminary injunction and put aside a claim for more than $1 billion in damages in favor of going directly to trial on the issue of getting Java back in Windows.

Sun, based in Santa Clara, California, claims that Microsoft views Sun’s

Java software as a threat because it can run on a variety of operating systems, not just on Microsoft’s Windows.

Sun charges Microsoft has tried to sabotage Java by a series of actions, most recently dropping it from Windows XP, which was introduced last year.

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’Spam’ Likely to Clutter E-Mail for Some Time

Sick of being inundated with get-rich-quick schemes and Viagra ads in your e-mail? Well, get used to it because, despite concerted efforts to fight it, "spam" is expected to get worse before it gets better, analysts say.

The average American will get more than 2,200 spam, or unsolicited bulk e-mail, messages this year and 3,600 by 2007, Jupiter Research forecasts.

"It’s getting easier to send spam messages. You can buy a CD-ROM with millions of e-mail addresses for next to nothing and send it out for next to nothing," said Jared Blank, senior analyst at Jupiter.

Spammers continue to come up with new and ingenious ways to bypass filters by misspelling words, sending e-mails from what appears to be yourself and putting messages in the subject lines that make people think the mail is from a friend.

Working just as furiously, companies are trying to help consumers and businesses, including some Internet services, to combat spam by coming up with new technologies -- creating a hot new sector -- with players like Brightmail Inc. and programs from McAfee.

Brightmail, for example, works with companies and Internet service providers to fight spam at the desktop and also offers a product that consumers can run to protect against computer viruses.

"Spammers are clever people and there is clearly an arms race between spammers and people trying to prevent spam that just constantly escalates," said Forrester analyst Jim Nail. "Having simple lists of spammers and domains -- that’s not enough because spammers change domains or addresses

to stay ahead."

Filters that work on a keyword basis to block spam depending on how frequently certain words appear don't work because spammers misspell words or write shorter e-mails so there are not as many occurrences. Blacklists, which only get 10 percent of spam and often get rid of valid e-mails as well, won't work, analysts said.

"It is worse. Newer tactics include harvesting attacks, which are trying to find out names and addresses of people who live in this enterprise," said Joyce Graff, analyst at Gartner. "It's like a virus game, so if you don't have a lab looking for new ploys -- whatever you implement won't be working for you in six months."

Brightmail said its recent data shows that spam has gone up from 8 percent of all Internet e-mail to about 40 percent.

"One of the challenges we find is that spam is global. A lot of it gets routed through unsecure servers," said Enrique Salem, chief executive of Brightmail. "So, as that happens, it's outside of any one country's jurisdiction."

The industry was collaborating with government agencies around the world to cut down on the problem, he added.

Analysts said there is hope for some relief in the future as regulators begin to take notice.

"While spammers are hard to track down and prosecute, you get a few of them and it will scare off others," Nail said.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission sued six junk e-mailers who bombarded Internet users with illegal pyramid schemes, fraudulent loans and e-mail filters that actually attracted spam instead of blocking it.

While spam is widely viewed as a nuisance, it is not illegal under U.S. laws.

Lawsuit Targets 'Deceptive' Online Ads

An Internet company that has allegedly duped millions of PC users into visiting its Web site by causing fake error messages to pop up on their screens has been slapped with a class action lawsuit seeking millions of dollars in damages.

The complaint accuses Internet portal Bonzi.com of tricking users into visiting its site through pop-up advertisements disguised as security alerts or other computer-system warnings. When users click on the advertisements, they are unwittingly directed to Bonzi's Web site, where the company hopes to sell them software and other products, the suit charges.

"The success of defendant's deceptive pirating of innocent users' computers is demonstrated in Bonzi.com's being vaulted to the level of third most frequently 'visited' Web site in the world," claims the suit, filed in the Washington State Superior Court of Spokane County.

The suit seeks class action status on behalf of all users in the United States who encountered the deceptive ads. It asks the court to ban the site's operator from the practice and award $500 to each affected user, as well as $5 for each deceptive advertisement issued. It says the company issued more than 300 million of the advertisements.

Named in the suit are Bonzi Software of San Luis Obispo, California, which operates the site, and its chief executives. They are accused of profiteering through false pretense, false representation, and actual fraud.

While Bonzi was not immediately available for comment Thursday, the firm has defended its advertising strategy to PC World in the past. "All we are trying to do is grab your attention the same way the employee outside Wal-Mart does by telling you what's on sale as you walk in," says John Epstein, a Bonzi spokesperson.

The advertisements use the familiar blue and gray interface of Windows system alerts and bear messages such as: "Security Alert: Your computer is currently broadcasting an Internet IP address. With this address, someone can immediately begin attacking your computer!"

When users click what appears to be the "OK" button to close the box, they are directed to the Bonzi.com portal, which offers a shopping mall, movie reviews, and other content.

"The Internet has unfortunately become a cornucopia for deceptive business practices," says a statement from Lukins & Annis, the Spokane, Washington, firm that filed the suit. "Class-based civil litigation will hopefully establish that the Internet is not, as some think, a sanctuary for those who engage in deception."

The firm could have targeted numerous Internet companies but chose Bonzi because it is among the most prolific offenders, says Darrell Scott, an attorney with Lukins & Annis. The firm's Web site provides material about the case and information for users who want to be part of the suit.

Lukins & Annis has been innundated with more than 700,000 e-mail messages from users in the U.S., Canada, and as far away as Australia asking how to initiate similar proceedings against Bonzi and other offenders, according to Scott.

"The Internet was ripe for some civil litigation that helps nudge it in an area that makes it a more prestigious and reliable way of doing business," he says.

A Spokane County judge will determine whether the lawsuit merits class action status and should be allowed to proceed. Scott says he'll begin filing motions with the court in about 60 days and hopes the case will come to trial within a year.

In making its case Lukins & Annis plans to cite "sixteenth-century English common law on interference with the public highway--in this case the public Internet highway," Scott says. Contemporary U.S. law is derived in large part from English common law, he notes.

One legal expert says the case may face an uphill battle. It's not clear that consumers suffer any real harm from Bonzi's actions, only the inconvenience of being taken to a Web site they don't intend to visit, says

Evan Cox, a partner with the law firm Covington & Burling who covers Internet law.

"The approach is interesting and there may be a lot of people out there rooting for the plaintiff on an emotional level, but the complaint probably faces an uphill battle on most of its courses of action," he says.

The judge may conclude that the matter could be better handled by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission or by state attorneys general under their consumer protection powers, he adds.

PGP Products Get Even Better

PGP introduced several new products on Tuesday, 16 weeks after it acquired the software portfolio based on the PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) security technology from Network Associates.

The Palo Alto, California, start-up released PGP 8.0 in Enterprise, Desktop, and Personal versions, as well as a new freeware version and the PGP 8.0 source code for peer review, the company said in a statement. PGP software's main function is to encrypt e-mail messages and files on a PC.

PGP Enterprise 8.0 and PGP Desktop 8.0 offer features meant for use in business environments, such as integration with multiple directory services and groupware products. Subscription pricing, available to U.S. and Canadian customers, for PGP Enterprise starts at $125 per seat and for PGP Desktop at $80 per seat, PGP said.

PGP Personal excludes links to enterprise services, but does allow users to encrypt e-mail and files on their hard disk drives, PGP said. PGP Personal is priced at $39, a promotion for the holiday season, the company said.

PGP Freeware 8.0, for personal and noncommercial use only, allows only the encrypting of e-mail and does not include plug-ins for e-mail clients. The PGP 8.0 source code is available for download; the license allows review only, not reuse, PGP said.

PGP is a start-up backed by $14 million in venture capital from Doll Capital Management and Venrock Associates. The company bought the PGP assets in August, almost a year after Network Associates said it would offload the unit as part of a reorganization.

The people at PGP are no strangers to the technology. President and Chief Executive Officer Phil Dunkelberger headed PGP when it was sold to Network Associates in 1997. Phil Zimmerman, the cryptography pioneer who developed PGP and launched PGP in 1996, is on the Technical Advisory Board of PGP.

Britain Catching Up on Fast Internet Access-Survey

Britain is closing the gap with its major European rivals in the take up of high-speed "broadband" Internet access, according to new research published by telecoms regulator Oftel on Friday.

"UK consumers are taking up broadband services at a faster rate than other key European countries and are paying a similar price," Oftel said in a statement.

However, the total number of broadband connections was still below France, Germany and Sweden, as well as the United States, largely because these countries started rolling out broadband services earlier than the UK, the regulator said.

The British government has come under criticism for letting market forces drive the take-up in broadband services, rather than pursuing a government-led strategy.

Prime Minister Tony Blair admitted last month that his 1998 target to make Britain the best environment in the world for e-commerce by this year had not been met, partly because of the sluggish take-up in broadband services.

He wants fast Internet access available to all by 2005.

Oftel said the new data showed broadband connections had now reached 28,000 a week in the UK.

"This research shows that consumers continue to benefit from the action taken by Oftel to promote competition," the regulator said in a statement.

File-Sharing Case Arguments Open Up

Lawyers representing record companies and movie studios argued in federal court Monday that companies marketing file-sharing services encourage illegal copying of music and movies.

Lawyers for the sharing services said they can’t control what users do with their software.

The arguments were made in a hearing seeking summary judgment in a lawsuit against the popular file-sharing services Grokster, StreamCast, which distributes the Morpheus peer-to-peer software, and Kazaa. It is similar to previous cases in which courts essentially shut down the file-sharing services Napster and Aimster.

Both sides are seeking summary judgment.

U.S. District Judge Stephen Wilson took no immediate action, but promised to make a ruling later. He did not say when that would be.

The file-sharing services are different from Napster, their attorneys argued, because they only provide software and help using that software.

The services don’t offer a list of songs and movies to users, but links do lead users to such lists, lawyers for the plaintiffs argued.

People using file-swapping services for illegal infringement are no different than people using a copy machine to illegally copy a book or a piece of sheet music, argued Charles Baker, a lawyer for one of the services.

But a lawyer for film studios said the services were designed around illegal downloading of music and movies.

"They have created a place where infringement can take place," argued David Kendall, who represents six movie studios, including Fox, Disney and Paramount.

Songwriters Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, responsible for such hits as "Hound Dog" and "Jailhouse Rock," are among the plaintiffs and were in the courtroom Monday. The song writing duo said illegal copying of music and movies was costing artists millions and would ultimately stifle creativity.

"We think it is important for us to be here," Leiber said. "This could be a disaster for our culture."

But Steve Griffin, CEO of Streamcast, said his company only provides a way for people to communicate with each other.

"I think the judge understands this is a very complex case and is really about the future of the Internet," Griffin said.

The plaintiffs are asking for the services to be closed down and that the companies be ordered to pay damages that could run into "many, many millions," said record industry attorney Russell J. Frackman.

Court Issues Restraining Order Against Aimster

A U.S. district court judge has issued a temporary restraining order to enforce an earlier preliminary injunction against peer-to-peer service Aimster, members of the recording industry said on Tuesday.

U.S. District Court Judge Marvin Aspen of the Northern District of Illinois issued the order on Monday directing Aimster, also known as Madster, to immediately disable and disconnect any and all computers, including servers, used in connection with any system or service owned or controlled by Aimster.

The order, which will remain in effect until Dec 22 or until further order from the court, also calls for Internet access to the Aimster system to be terminated immediately.

John Deep, Aimster’s founder, declined comment.

The recording industry also recently filed a motion to find Aimster in contempt on the grounds it has willfully disregarded the preliminary injunction order. A hearing on that motion is set for Dec. 19, 2002.

"Aimster and John Deep have no excuse for not complying with the court’s November 4th preliminary injunction," said Cary Sherman, president of the Recording Industry Association of America. The trade group represented the record labels that were plaintiffs in the case.

"This temporary restraining order will certainly make clear that the infringement must stop immediately, whether that is through Aimster’s actions or actions by its Internet Service Provider," he said.

Deep is currently without counsel after his former attorneys withdrew from

the case, citing differences in strategy.

He said he was unsure if he could hire another lawyer, noting:

"The plaintiffs are a very wealthy, powerful band."

L.A. Man Charged with Scamming eBay Buyers

A Los Angeles man was charged on Wednesday with defrauding eBay buyers on six continents in what prosecutors called one of the largest Internet auctions scams uncovered.

Chris Chong Kim, 27, was charged with four counts of grand theft and 26 counts of holding a mock auction for allegedly failing to deliver the high-end computers and computer parts he sold on his eBay business site, Calvin Auctions.

Kim was scheduled to be arraigned on Wednesday in Los Angeles. He was arrested on Tuesday and was jailed in lieu of $400,000 bail. If convicted on all counts, he faces up to 24 years in prison.

The criminal complaint against Kim listed losses of $453,000 to 26 U.S. customers, eBay Inc. and Bank of America Corp.

Los Angeles County prosecutors said Kim had been selling computers, laptops and other equipment for two years through Calvin Auctions. In April, he allegedly stopped shipping products but continued to sell on eBay until his business was shut down two months later.

The online auction house received more than 170 complaints from customers around the world. Their losses ranged from $1,900 to $6,000 each, prosecutors said.

Russian Software Co. Goes on Trial

A Russian software company and one of its young programmers are on trial for allegedly concocting a moneymaking scheme to "crack" software produced by Adobe Systems.

Elcomsoft Co. Ltd., its chief executive, Alex Katalov, and programmer Dmitry Sklyarov are charged with selling software that allows users to disable security features in Adobe’s eBook reader software, which is used to access digital publications.

"They were selling a burglar tool for software to make a profit," prosecutor Scott Frewing said in his opening remarks to jurors Tuesday. "They did it for money."

The case against the Moscow-based company marks the government’s first criminal prosecution under the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Defense attorney Joseph Burton said Elcomsoft never intended its product to be used for illegal purposes. He also suggested to jurors that San Jose-based Adobe had urged the government to file criminal charges in an

attempt to protect the company’s revenues.

Burton said Elcomsoft’s program would only work for people who had legitimately purchased an eBook. Only five copies were sold in the United States during the 10 days the software was offered for sale and it was never used to make illegal copies, he said.

The Elcomsoft product, called the Advanced eBook Processor Program, is based upon an algorithm developed by Sklyarov that allows the removal of publisher-imposed usage restrictions.

Elcomsoft says its program simply lets users make backup copies or transfer content to other devices, something permitted under the "fair use" concept of copyright law. Although such programs are legal in Russia, they were outlawed by the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Sklyarov was arrested after speaking at a Las Vegas hacker convention in July 2001. He spent several weeks in jail before being freed on $50,000 bail and eventually was allowed to return home. Charges against Sklyarov, who will be a government witness, will be dropped when the case is completed, prosecutors say.

Adobe apparently withdrew its support of the prosecution after Internet policy groups threatened to organize a boycott of the company’s products. Civil libertarians say the digital copyright act stifles computer research and gives publishers, record companies and movie studios too tight a grip on online content.

Feds Must Justify Snooping Tactics

Federal investigators may soon have to tell how they’ve been using their expanded surveillance powers since the terrorist attacks.

A federal judge has set a January 15 deadline for the Justice Department to answer a Freedom of Information Act request seeking such disclosure. The request was filed in August by the Electronic Privacy Information Center and the American Civil Liberties Union. They subsequently sued, saying that the government has ignored their request.

"We’re definitely pleased that the judge set a specific deadline for compliance and we’re hoping that the Justice Department will take the opportunity to turn over the records," says Jameel Jaffer, ACLU staff attorney.

Hoping to prevent future terrorist attacks, Congress passed the Patriot Act, which gives the government new tools for gathering personal information about U.S. residents and citizens.

Police and the FBI can now obtain a so-called pen register order permitting them to monitor a suspect’s Web surfing. They can retrieve any URLs accessed and any addresses where e-mail has been sent. Investigators can also use a trap-and-trace surveillance technique to record the senders’ addresses on a suspect’s incoming e-mail, but not to read its content.

"These powers are extremely broad," Jaffer says. "There is a danger that powers framed as broadly as these will be abused."

The Justice Department claims to have identified 300 pages of material that answers the request, according to David Sobel, EPIC's general counsel. He says the DOJ is now determining whether to release it.

Withholding basic information on how investigators are implementing the Patriot Act is problematic, Sobel says. "We think it is important to establish the principal that information needs to be made public," he says.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman James Sensenbrenner (R-Wisconsin) made a similar inquiry into the use of the Patriot Act's new powers. While Sensenbrenner said he was satisfied with the answers he received, privacy advocates object to the government's withholding of some of the information under the label "classified."

"If we had been asking about information that would reveal the specifics of an ongoing investigation, than that would be classified," EPIC's Sobel says. "That's not what we are asking for."

EPIC and the ACLU want comprehensive statistical information on how many times new powers have been used. For example, they have requested data on how many times the government has ordered ISPs to release information under the Patriot Act. Also, they'd like to know how often the FBI has wiretapped American citizens and intercepted their e-mail.

In addition, they want a copy of the guidelines the FBI sent to its agents on how to implement the new tools.

"The release of this kind of information isn't going to jeopardize investigations," ACLU's Jaffer says.

Sobel notes that the FBI released three documents that give the bureau's internal description of the Patriot Act and outline the new authority for employees. He called the description "straightforward" and similar to other things the government has said.

The Justice Department may be preparing for a second round of counterterrorism legislation. The government has already proposed further expansion of surveillance powers, including those of the new Information Awareness Office, Jaffer says.

Before approving more surveillance powers, citizens need to know whether the government is using its current authority responsibly, Jaffer says. If the government is imposing those powers too broadly, the civil liberties groups may seek ways to narrow or repeal them, he adds.

AOL to Begin Offering Exclusive Content

America Online said Tuesday it will begin offering exclusive content from other divisions at parent AOL Time Warner Inc. to keep and attract customers as the world's largest online service provider attempts a turnaround.

But the division offered a financial forecast for 2003 that disappointed Wall Street and sent AOL shares down 11 percent.

America Online said it would meet its previously issued 2002 financial

forecast, but expects a drop of 40 to 50 percent in advertising and commerce revenues next year. The division said it expected overall 2003 revenues to be flat despite those declines as "solid growth" in worldwide subscription revenues limit the damage.

Although some drop-off had been expected, Wall Street was not pleased with the extent of the projected decline in ad and commerce revenue. AOL Time Warner's stock price fell 14.2 percent, or $2.36 to close Tuesday at $14.21 on the New York Stock Exchange.

The news came as company officials met with Wall Street analysts and investors, and provided the first major strategic update since word this summer the Justice Department and Securities and Exchange Commission were investigating the division's accounting practices.

The content deals announced Tuesday, which involve magazines such as People, as well as Warner Bros. music, CNN and HBO programs, had been widely anticipated as America Online repositions itself amid questions about the viability of its business.

Jon Miller, the division's new chief executive, said America Online would spend the next year refocusing on member satisfaction and retention. He said that providing content that can't be found anywhere else on the Web is essential to profitability. The content deals with other AOL Time Warner divisions are seen as a key element of that.

"We have to become even more relevant to our members' experience," he said. "We'll keep leveraging the firsts and exclusives that are making it cool to be on AOL again."

Among the initiatives announced Tuesday were plans to offer video from CNN for free to America Online members that currently is available for a fee on the Internet. Content from Time Inc. magazines such as People and Real Simple will also be exclusively offered, as will music and entertainment offerings. Also, HBO and America Online plan to collaborate on original programming. All the partnering companies are AOL Time Warner divisions.

"Our hope and anticipation is to work across entire array of all our businesses and create an online product offering that is so compelling that online consumer simply can't live without it," said AOL Time Warner chief executive Richard Parsons. "This is going to be a team effort. We're all committed to getting this thing done."

Miller also said that the company would offer more choices to customers who access the Internet via high-speed or broadband connections.

The bulk of America Online's members access the Internet via dial-up connections, but the growth prospects for that market is slowing as Internet users switch to broadband performance. America Online offers broadband, but its product is pricier than others, and many investors are concerned the company is losing ground.

America Online executives also said e-commerce will become another focus, as the company explores other ways to make money outside of subscriber fees. The company also hopes to do a better job of wooing advertisers. Many of the lucrative, pricey long-term ad contracts made during the Internet boom years are expiring, and will not be renewed under as favorable terms.

Premium services, for which an America Online customer pays extra, are

also a key part of the turnaround.

One announced Tuesday is an online anti-virus service provided in conjunction with Network Associates' McAfee product. Although all members will get a basic level of protection from viruses brought in via e-mail, for example, the new premium service will extend the virus protection beyond e-mail to the user's personal computer system. No details were released about pricing or when the service would become available.

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